

pygmies of the upper Sangha river (Central African Republic) and by Paul van Thiel in Nkore (Uganda). Generally, all these authors have over the years adopted field research methods that are paying increasing attention to concepts and terminologies expressed in the local languages, working with informants who can write down names in acceptable spellings, and in some cases (e.g. Paul van Thiel) working from a basis of (the researcher's) personal language proficiency. The intensity of the descriptive ethnographic data and the unique picture documents are what makes this book an indispensable reference volume for the Central African region.

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CAPOEIRA, SAMBA, CANDOMBLÉ: AFRO-BRASILIANISCHE MUSIK IM RECÔNCAVO, BAHIA, by Tiago de Oliveira Pinto, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz (Veröffentlichungen des Museums für Völkerkunde Berlin, Neue Folge 52, Abteilung Musikethnologie VII), Berlin, 1991, 264pp., ill., bibl., index.

This study by Brazilian-born and Berlin-based ethnomusicologist Tiago de Oliveira Pinto is a major piece of ethnographic work, a milestone of Brazilian ethnomusicology and a model exemplary of the new ethnomusicology emerging from a young generation of scholars working in Germany today.

The focus of Pinto's book is the core musical genres capoeira, samba and candomblé currently performed in the Recôncavo, the rural hinterland of the city of Salvador de Bahia in North-eastern Brazil. Although Pinto recognises and in part analyses the intertextuality of capoeira, samba and candomblé, he treats each of these genres separately. Thus the book is divided into six chapters, three of which are devoted to these genres. While the two opening chapters deal with the history and ethnography of the Recôncavo and basic concepts of Afro-Brazilian performance respectively, chapter 6 is concerned with children's musical activities.

Chapter 3, the first of the three core chapters, offers a detailed analysis of the main components of capoeira, the ingenious African-derived blend of martial art, dance and music. Thus, Pinto provides painstakingly detailed descriptions of the historical background of capoeira, its musical instruments *berimbau* (musical bow) and *caxixi* (rattle), and of the types of rhythmic patterns (*toques*) and improvisational techniques used in performance. A brief discussion of the motional structure of capoeira and the transcript of an interview with the eminent capoeirista Mestre Vavá conclude this part of the book. Throughout the chapter Pinto illustrates his analysis with numerous transcriptions, photographs and line drawings that basically leave no aspect of musical structure and playing technique undocumented. In addition, musical terminology, questions of etymology and capoeira song lyrics are subject to comprehensive scrutiny.

In Chapter 4, Pinto turns his attention to the samba, the quintessential genre of Brazilian national identity. There are numerous regional and local variants of the samba in Bahia and elsewhere in Brazil, the most common type in the Recôncavo

apparently being the one performed on the *machete* or *viola*, a ten-stringed guitar, and a set of tambourines called *pandeiro*. Here, as in the preceding chapter, Pinto's main concern is to document instrumental playing techniques, song lyrics and samba choreography. Although Pinto notes striking parallels in Recôncavo *viola* playing with African inherent patterns and two-finger guitar picking, he concludes that these similarities are based on comparable musical concepts in both areas rather than on real contacts between African guitarists and their Brazilian counterparts.

Following the structure of chapters 3 and 4, chapter 5 on the *candomblé* is concerned primarily with a typology of the musical instruments, drum patterns, deities, choreographic genres, and ritual activity. Likewise, as in the earlier chapters, Pinto's survey highlights the complex interplay of the African cultural heritage and local creativity, at the same time remaining sensitive to the on-going transformation of *candomblé* ritual practice within the context of national integration.

I have learned a great deal from this book, particularly from Pinto's lucid analysis of capoeira music in chapter 3. Chapters like this one not only demonstrate Pinto's strong anchorage in the German academic tradition of methodological and classificatory rigour. They also show the author at his best where he examines structure rather than process, parts rather than wholes. Similarly, Pinto excels in the presentation of emic categories, but he is less concerned with the processes from which these emerged. Finally, although the author repeatedly stresses his intention not to portray Recôncavo performance as a unified, homogeneous system of practices and meanings, the extent to which these are actively being negotiated within the context of local, regional, national — and increasingly international — politics, economics and social interaction is bracketed from his account. Coupled with a certain neglect of concrete, closely observed and described performances of capoeira and *candomblé* in particular, this emphasis on units of analysis, segments and components makes for a certain schematism in Pinto's discourse which, in a sense, runs counter to Pinto's stated aim to represent Recôncavo musical practice in all its wealth of forms and multiplicity of meanings.

These observations apart, *Capoeira, Samba, Candomblé* is an important publication that will be useful in deconstructing many of our most entrenched exotic images and myths of Brazil and its musics. Used in conjunction with the excellent CD *Capoeira, Samba, Candomblé/Bahia, Brasil* by the same author (Museum Collection Berlin CD 16, ISBN 3-88609-516-9), the book is a fine introduction to a fascinating part of the world and its musics that will appeal to a broad audience of specialists and "world music" lover alike.

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